

Bard College

**Realism Reconsidered:
Ethics and International Politics**

**Fall Term 2004
Mondays 4 - 6 p.m.**

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Course Description

What values guide us as we make choices about the use of force, resolving conflict, promoting human rights and social justice, encouraging democracy and development, preserving the environment, and participating in international organizations?

This course is designed to provide analytical rigor to the perennial question: what role do ethical considerations play in the conduct of international affairs? Two basic questions provide its structure: Is ethical action possible given the realities of national interests and power politics? And how, in ethical terms, can international acts and institutions be evaluated? We begin with reconsiderations of the two dominant paradigms in international relations today, realism and globalization. We then address several thematic issues of immediate policy relevance.

Course Requirements

- * Students will be required to hand in 1-2 page "response to reading" memos at each class. Memos should raise at least 2 - 3 points that the student would like to discuss in class. These memos, along with class participation, will count for 50% of the final grade.
- * Students will also be required to lead off the discussion (along with one or two fellow students) in at least one class session.
- * 1-2 page prospectus of research seminar paper.

DUE October 4

- * 7-8 page interim report reviewing topic and bibliography to be used in the final paper.

DUE November 8

- * 20-25 page final seminar paper containing three elements: (1) factual description and historical background of a particular issue/case study in the normative dimension of international affairs; (2) an explication of the moral issues involved; (3) analysis and conclusions. Or students may write a review essay of similar length on a particular normative analyst of international affairs. The instructor will provide a list of potential subjects. This paper will account for 50% of the final grade.

DUE December 6

Required Texts

Joel H. Rosenthal, ed., Ethics & International Affairs: A Reader (Georgetown University Press, 1999, 2nd edition)

James Rachels, The Elements of Moral Philosophy (McGraw Hill, 1998)

John J. Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics (WW Norton, 2001)

Robert Jackson, The Global Covenant (Oxford University Press, 2000)

Peter Singer, One World: The Ethics of Globalization (Yale University Press, 2002)

Michael Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars (Basic Books, 1999)

Martha C. Nussbaum, ed., For Love of Country: Debating the Limits of Patriotism (Beacon Press, 1996)

Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom (Knopf, 1999)

All texts are available in paperback for purchase.

Course Outline

- Week II September 20 *ETHICS AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS:
AN OXYMORON?*
- 105-108
- *Mearsheimer, The Tragedy of Great Power Politics 1-54
 - * Rosenthal, "Ethics" in Encyclopedia of U.S. Foreign Policy (Vol.2)
- Week III September 27 *MORAL ARGUMENT*
- * James Rachels, The Elements of Moral Philosophy (McGraw Hill, 3rd ed. 1998) 1-29; 117-126; 180-193
 - * Frances Harbour, "Basic Moral Values: A Shared Core" (in Rosenthal, Reader)
 - * Amartya Sen, "Human Rights and Asian Values" (in Rosenthal, Reader)
 - * John Lewis Gaddis, "On Moral Equivalency and the Cold War," (in Rosenthal, Reader).
- Week IV October 4 *REALISM RECONSIDERED PART I*
- * Francis Fukuyama, "The End of History?" Conflict After the Cold War: Arguments on Causes of War and Peace, Roland Betts, ed., 5 -18
 - *Samuel Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations," Foreign Affairs, Summer 1993
 - *Jonathan Sacks, The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations, 1-44
- Week V October 11 *REALISM RECONSIDERED PART II (will be re-scheduled)*

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* Robert Jackson, The Global Covenant, 1-96

Week VI October 18 *TODAY'S PARADIGM: GLOBALIZATION*

Peter Singer, One World: The Ethics of Globalization

Week VII October 25 *COSMOPOLITANISM AND ITS LIMITS*

* Martha Nussbaum, For Love of Country

* Michael Ignatieff, "Human Rights as Idolatry"

* Michael Ignatieff, "Is Nothing Sacred?: The Ethics of Television"

Week VIII November 1 *JUSTICE AND THE WORLD ECONOMY PART I*

* Amartya Sen, Development as Freedom 1-111

Week IX November 8 *JUSTICE AND THE WORLD ECONOMY Part II*

(2002), * Andrew Bacevich, "Strategy of Openness," in American Empire
79-116

* Thomas Donaldson, "Moral Minimums for Multinationals," (in Rosenthal, Reader)

* Iris Young, "From Guilt to Solidarity: Sweatshops and Political Responsibility," Dissent (Spring 2003)

Week X November 15 *JUST WAR? (Part 1)*

Michael Walzer, Just & Unjust Wars, 1-126

Course Outline

* Bernard Kouchner, "The Changing Role of Humanitarianism" 23rd Annual Morgenthau Memorial Lecture

Week XI November 22 *THE POLITICS OF RECONCILIATION*

* Lyn S. Graybill, "South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Ethical and Theological Perspectives," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 12) 43-62

* David Crocker, "Reckoning With Past Wrongs: A Normative Framework," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 13) 43-64

* David Little, "A Different Kind of Justice: Dealing with Human Rights Violations in Transitional Societies," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 13) 65-80

* Susan Dwyer, "Reconciliation for Realists," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 13) 81-98

Week XII November 29 *ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AS AN INTERNATIONAL ISSUE*

* Daniel S. Smith, "Place-Based Environmentalism and Global Warming," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 15.2) 117-134

* Robert Goodin, "International Ethics and the Environmental Crisis," (in Rosenthal, Reader)

* Steven M. Gardiner, "The Global Warming Tragedy and the Dangerous Illusion of the Kyoto Protocol," Ethics & International Affairs (Vol. 18.1) 23 - 39

* Elizabeth R. DeSombre, "Global Warming: More Common Than Tragic," Ethics & International Affairs (vol. 18.1) 41-46

Week XIII December 6 *ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS AND HUMAN RIGHTS*

* Human Rights Dialogue (Spring 2004) "Environmental Rights"

Week XIV December 13 *STUDENT REPORTS*

* *All readings marked with asterisk will be supplied by instructor.*